United Nations E/AC.51/2004/L.5/Add.33

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
24 June 2004

Original: English

Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-fourth session
7 June-2 July 2004
Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on the work of its forty-fourth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Hitoshi **Kozaki** (Japan)

Addendum

Programme questions: evaluation

Item 3 (c)

Triennial review of the in-depth evaluation of sustainable development

1. At its third meeting, on 7 June 2004, the Committee considered the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee at its forty-first session on the in-depth evaluation of sustainable development (E/AC.51/2004/4).

2. The representative of OIOS introduced the report. Representatives of OIOS and the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of the report.

Discussion

3. Satisfaction was expressed that significant progress had been made on the recommendations and that resultant improvements had already been noted. The view was expressed that the OIOS report was both balanced and accurate. There was general agreement with the overall assessment of the report.

04-40241 (E) 250604

4. The Division for Sustainable Development was commended for its efforts to implement the recommendations, in particular its work to revitalize the Commission on Sustainable Development, its initiatives to involve major groups and strengthen partnerships within the Organization and its enhancement of the Division's web site. It was suggested that the web site could be further utilized as a clearing house for national experience with sustainable development.

5. Regarding recommendation 2, on enhancing the understanding of sustainable development, concern was expressed that a common understanding had still not been achieved. It was noted that more attention should be given to ensuring that such a common understanding was reached and that the dissemination of information on the concept of sustainable development was of fundamental importance.

6. Regarding recommendation 3, on streamlining reporting, the Division was encouraged to further streamline its requirements for national reporting. It was suggested that the Division provide technical assistance to assist countries in meeting their national reporting requirements and that emphasis be given to different national reporting structures. It was also noted that importance should be placed on the quality rather than on the quantity of reports.

7. The view was expressed that the Division should continue to play a coordinating role in the United Nations, as exemplified by its position as secretariat of "UN Water". Further, the view was expressed that the Division should further enhance its inter-agency coordination and that it was uniquely placed to harmonize disparate efforts in the area of sustainable development.

8. The need to continue support to national sustainable development programmes and to provide technical assistance was also noted. It was suggested that the Division raise awareness of its technical assistance programme.

9. Concern was expressed at the finding of OIOS (para. 34) concerning the existence of vulnerabilities in the use of indicators to monitor the development and implementation of national sustainable development strategies.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. **The Committee recommended approval of the conclusion of the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee at its forty-first session on the in-depth evaluation of sustainable development (E/AC.51/2004/4).**

11. **The Committee stressed the need for the Division for Sustainable Development to further enhance its efforts to ensure that a common understanding of sustainable development, incorporating its social, economic and environmental pillars, be achieved in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/253.**

12. **The Committee also emphasized that the Division should focus on promoting multisectoral approaches in the area of sustainable development and to continue contributing to effective inter-agency cooperation.**

13. **The Committee stressed that the achievement of sustainable development objectives depends on the effective collection and analysis of data on national progress towards goals in the social, economic and environmental areas on a voluntary basis and in the context of national priorities and strategies. At the same time, the Committee requested the Division to continue to make efforts to avoid unnecessary duplication with other organs in the United Nations system when asking for national reporting.**